

A2012-11

Christine Mallon, resident

PO Box 261

Ardenvoir, WA 98811

December 21, 2011

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Reply Brief in Response to Answering Brief [CFR 3001.115 (d)]
Docket #A 2012-11

POSTAL REGULATORY
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

This response, in the matter of Ardenvoir WA Post Office 98811, is filed by an **ordinary citizen** C. Mallon of Ardenvoir in response to Postal Service **attorneys** in Washington DC (A. Alvernot; B. Osimokun).

To their brief dated December 8, 2011 we reply:

1) Effect of services:

Their background pg. 2 cites a low number of transactions of Ardenvoir post office as a factor to close. This number is misleading because the survey was done in February, a low-use time for postal transactions in Ardenvoir. Page 3 cites that the Entiat Post Office 98822 has several boxes for rent 12 miles distant, and USPS continually refers to it as "nearby"...we have repeatedly stated why this distance increases cost to the Ardenvoir customers, and that is never addressed. It is stated pg 3 that delivery can be provided to Cluster Box Units (CBU) installed on the carrier route; the cost of these "may be able to be provided" to customers. We currently pay \$40.00/year and if USPS does *not* pay for these \$850.00 units, you can see the financial penalty born by the customer.

On pg 8, USPS cites reasonable and safe service, but we have continually specified that the several 82, 84, 89, 90 year old box holders can currently leave their mail securely for days at a time at the PO until snow is cleared from their driveways and the road; however with a roadside box, the long rural driveways to negotiate on foot and to also dig away the ice and snow thrown by snowplows so the carrier can access is not an acceptable trade. They can go 1-3 miles to Ardenvoir when the road is plowed as opposed to 14+ miles to Entiat as you suggest we can get boxes there.

The postmaster vacancy cited on pg 5 in light of ASM revisions December 1, 2011...is it possible this could result in a savings for a refigured annual cost of maintaining Ardenvoir P.O.?

2) community:

USPS continues to refer to a community of "vacation homes in a forest setting" p 11 – who comes up with this?? An official from Seattle? Two lawyers from Washington DC? There are probably 800 residences the 38 mile length of the Entiat River Rd which includes Ardenvoir, but not the Entiat PO which is on the US Hwy97A on the Columbia River. I have lived here for 35 years and can point out the majority of homes where permanent residents live vs vacationers. If you are depending on the few postal questionnaires returned, the number completed is a poor representation of who actually lives here upon which you seem to be basing your statements. Pg 12 you cite the effect of closing rural post offices & the effect on rural America vs urban post offices to save money. Our Washington State senator to Olympia, Linda Parlette and our US Congressman Hastings have something to say to that (attachments A & B), concerning the need for rural post offices.

3) economy:

Again, we wonder if refiguring costs will reduce the estimated \$42,159/year (less \$3000 moving cost) given the recent action by US Senators requesting a delay in the consolidation of Post Offices and mail processing facilities. If the Congress can rescind the financial burdens they placed on the USPS in 2005, 2006 that started all of this budget crisis, we hope the economic savings will be a moot point.

In conclusion, we continue to reject the determination to close Ardenvoir Post Office based on the errant facts and ignored citizen concerns specified in the 3 areas above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine Mallon". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".



App. A

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December 8, 2011

Mr. Sylvester Black,
Vice President, Area Operations — Western Area
1745 Stout St. Suite 1000
Denver, CO 80299

Mr. Black,

In recent weeks I have received correspondence from constituents who are concerned with the potential closure of Post Offices in Chelan Falls, Stehekin and Ardenvoir (my understanding is that while Ardenvoir is not on the current list for consideration, it may still be in jeopardy). Though you may have heard from many of these same individuals, I am writing to reiterate their concerns and share my thoughts on the issue.

As the Washington State Senator from the 12th Legislative District, I represent many small communities in the counties of Chelan and Douglas, as well as parts of Grant and Okanogan. Small towns are the backbone of America, and post offices are frequently an integral part of the fabric that holds these communities together. One person told me that losing their postal office would be akin to "tearing out the heart of their town."

I recognize that the Postal Service's budget situation requires difficult decisions to be made. It is the reality that we are facing at many levels of government across our country — we cannot continue to do business in the same way. My question is whether the proposed Post Office closures are proportionate among urban and rural areas. It is my hope that the burden of budget cuts will fall equally, and that the process will take into account the unique benefit that physical offices offer to small rural communities where alternative postal services may not be an option. To varying degrees, the targeted offices in my district are in isolated communities that lack alternate mail service options and/or reliable internet.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter. Please do not hesitate to let me know if I can be of assistance on this matter in any way.

Sincerely,

LINDA EVANS PARLETTE
Washington State Senator
12th Legislative District

DOC HASTINGS
4TH DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
December 8, 2011

Ms. Christine Mallon
PO Box 261
Ardenvoir, Washington 98811

Dear Christine:

Thank you for contacting me regarding your concerns with the future of the United States Postal Service (USPS) in Central Washington. I appreciate you taking the time to share your views with me.

As you may be aware, the USPS has taken a significant financial hit in recent years due to the expanded use of electronic communication and the economic conditions of several industries that are traditionally heavy users. As a self-supporting agency not subsidized by the taxpayers, the USPS has already taken a number of steps to reduce overall costs. They are also currently reviewing proposals to consolidate operations further by closing thousands of postal facilities across the nation, including several in Central Washington.

While I understand and appreciate efforts to reduce costs and improve efficiency, I am concerned that the USPS has not considered all of the impacts the closure and consolidation plans would have on Central Washington. As a result, I have written the Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe and my staff has met with representatives from the USPS to express my concerns about the closure of postal facilities and the loss of individual postmarks. Be certain that as I will keep your views in mind as Congress considers proposals to ensure the viability of long-term USPS operations.

Again, thank you for contacting me on this important issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me in the future on matters of importance to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Doc Hastings", written over a horizontal line.

Doc Hastings
Member of Congress

DH: JP

Please visit my website at www.hastings.house.gov where you can sign up to receive email updates about my work in Congress on issues of importance to Central Washington.